

VZCZCXRO2636
OO RUEHDE RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHNR #1339 1811553
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 301553Z JUN 09
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0055
INFO RUCNSOM/SOMALIA COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
RHMFIUU/CJTF HOA IMMEDIATE
RUZEFAA/CDR USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE IMMEDIATE
RUZEFAA/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE IMMEDIATE
RHMCSUU/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS NAIROBI 001339

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/E, AF/PD AND A/S CARSON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KDEM](#) [EAID](#) [PTER](#) [KPAO](#) [SO](#)

SUBJECT: SOMALIA - AMBASSADOR VISITS WOUNDED SOMALIS IN
NAIROBI HOSPITAL

REF: NAIROBI 1237

Summary

11. (SBU) Ambassador Ranneberger visited wounded elders and Transitional Federal Government (TFG) officials at Nairobi West Hospital on June 26, Ten of the patients had been injured during the June 18 suicide bombing in Beletweyne that resulted in the death of TFG Minister of National Security Omar Hashi (reftel), while four others were TFG forces who had suffered injuries in the recent fighting in Mogadishu. The Ambassador then addressed Somali and Kenyan media, fielding a variety of questions, many focused on the June 25 Washington Post article describing U.S. arms shipments to Somalia. Media coverage of the visit has been very positive.
End summary.

Hospital Visit
Receives Positive Coverage

12. (SBU) On June 26, Ambassador Ranneberger visited injured Somali elders and Transitional Federal Government (TFG) troops at Nairobi West Hospital. Ten of the wounded Somalis had been victims of the June 18 suicide bombing in Beletweyne that killed TFG Minister of National Security Omar Hashi (reftel). Four others were TFG troops who had been injured in recent fighting in Mogadishu, and subsequently evacuated to Nairobi. The Ambassador, who was accompanied by officials from the Somali Embassy in Nairobi, had private discussions with several of the patients, reiterating U.S. support for the TFG.

13. (U) After visiting the wounded Somalis inside the wards, the Ambassador addressed Somali and Kenyan media outside the hospital. The Ambassador commented on U.S. support for the TFG at this critical juncture, noting that the TFG continues to enjoy U.S. and international support, particularly during the current fight against the extremist opposition. Responding to questions on the June 25 media report of U.S. weapons shipments to Somalia, the Ambassador noted that the shipments had come after UNSC approval and stated that the assistance is aimed at helping the legitimate government of Somalia.

14. (U) Media coverage of the visit was very positive. Somali-language radio Star FM highlighted the Ambassador's

condolences to victims and families of the victims of the June 18 bombing, and also noted the Ambassador's comment that the U.S. will support the TFG, which enjoys support of the Somali people. Radio stations Simba and Frontier FM, both Somali outlets, carried similar coverage. Somali-language Eastern Television Network (ETN) also highlighted the fact that the weapons shipment had come after UNSC approval. Kenyan press, which has lately been very interested in Somalia issues (septel), also covered the event widely. KTN and NTV in Kenya covered the event, focusing on the arms shipments and recent turmoil in Somalia. The Kenya Times, Saturday edition, noted the Ambassador's comment that the U.S. is confident in the success of the TFG. The People Daily reported that the Ambassador affirmed that the U.S. was ready to support Kenya's efforts to prevent al-Shabaab violence from spreading into Kenya.

RANNEBERGER